

Invitation for Expressions of Interest

Enduring SEMO Focus Group

Background

Responses to the 2021-24 Price Control consultation ([SEM-21-046](#)) highlighted that market participants had a willingness to engage about the performance/service levels of SEMO, prioritisation of capital projects and market system changes.

As part of the SEMO Price Control Decision ([SEM-21-073](#)) for the period 2021-24, a commitment was made by the Regulatory Authorities¹ (RAs) for market participants to be involved in the performance and development of the SEM during the price control period.

The RAs stated “We consider that there is merit in conducting a review with the assistance of a market participant focus group for the unpredictable/uncertain/unknown projects in each year of the price control period since many of SEMO’s proposals are insufficiently well-developed and thought out at this stage. Further development of proposals would improve reliability of SEMO’s costings and ensure value-add for consumers.”

The SEMO Focus Group was formed and met for the first time in March 2022, to ensure that market participants’ views were well considered within the development of the SEM, as a means of improving accountability and transparency between SEMO and market participants. The scope of the Focus Group includes SEMO Performance and Reporting, Capital Projects and System Changes, and Known Issues within existing Market Systems. Membership of the Group comprises the RAs, SEMO and a representative group of industry participants.

As part of the SEMO Price Control Decision ([SEM-25-034](#)) for the period 2024–2029, the RAs outlined that the SEMO Focus Group will continue to meet in order to

¹ Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) in Ireland and Utility Regulator (UR) in Northern Ireland, collectively referred to as the ‘Regulatory Authorities’ (RAs)

provide feedback on the performance and development of SEMO throughout the price control period.

The 2024-2029 Price Control Decision Paper states that “*SEMO will continue to report updates to their capital expenditure programme through the enhanced reporting regime introduced and implemented within the previous price control*”, to include the SEMO Focus Group.

The Terms of Reference ([SEM-21-108](#)) for the SEMO Focus Group included direct links to the 2021-24 Price Control and, given the success of the Group to date, the RAs are now minded to retain the Focus Group on an enduring basis to ensure continued participation of market participants. This invitation for Expressions of Interest includes a renewed Terms of Reference for the SEMO Focus Group.

Expressions of Interest

Expressions of interest are requested from industry representatives of participants in the Single Electricity Market (SEM), or from individual participants who are either not represented by such a body or who wish to represent their own organisation. These expressions of interest are sought with a view to assisting the RAs as a collective ‘SEMO Focus Group’ in their considerations on how the market should evolve. A Terms of Reference for the SEMO Focus Group is annexed to this invitation.

To ensure efficient and productive meetings, the RAs would prefer to keep membership to within ten industry members, ideally across a range of technologies. The SEMO Focus Group will be chaired by an industry member, and the RAs will facilitate and administer the Group.

All candidates will be expected to declare any conflicts of interest when providing their expression of interest and declare any other conflict of interest throughout the duration of this SEMO Focus Group being in effect. Any noted conflicts of interests will be made transparent at meetings to all members.

We request that all Expressions of Interest are submitted by 17:00 on 3 October 2025 to caroline.winder@uregni.gov.uk and tsc@cru.ie with the following information:

- Organisation (and any other organisations you represent, as applicable)
- Name of nominated representative of your organisation
- Position/role of nominated representative in organisation
- Contact details of nominated representative
- Are you willing to perform the role of Chair for the SEMO Focus Group?
- Up to 5-line summary of what skills and experience you could offer the SEMO Focus Group
- If there are any conflicts of interest if participating in the SEMO Focus Group

The RAs will consider the appropriate membership of the SEMO Focus Group based on an assessment of the Expressions of Interest received. Interested parties will be advised via email if they have been appointed to the Focus Group, and a Chair will be appointed as applicable. Please note that submission of an Expression of Interest indicates an agreement to abide by the Terms of Reference of the Focus Group in the event that membership is granted. Membership will be at the discretion of the RAs.

Annex: Terms of Reference for SEMO Focus Group

These are the Terms of Reference for the SEMO Focus Group, following on from the Invitation for Expressions of Interest which provided the background for creating this group. These Terms of Reference will be reviewed and updated as necessary from time to time (at least in line with the commencement of a new SEMO Price Control period).

The purpose of the SEMO Focus Group is to provide market participants with an opportunity to constructively engage with SEMO and the RAs on the performance and development (the capital programme) of the SEM.

The outputs of the SEMO Focus Groups should encourage an open and transparent approach to the performance and development of the SEM (within the confines of the prevailing SEMO Price Control decision) including:

- Identifying key performance areas e.g. Performance Criteria, Key Performance Indicators and Streamlined Regulatory Reporting.
- Overview of overall SEMO capital programme, including Market System Development Plans where applicable.
- Earmarking Unpredictable Capital Expenditure projects being/to be progressed within relevant SEMO price control allowances.
- Clarity and understanding of the makeup and prioritisation by SEMO on the use of the market system release vendor hours for upcoming releases.
- Examining potential spare capacity/ flexibility within forthcoming releases to address outstanding known issues or other future development system changes (excluding approved TSC modification system changes for which updates should be brought to the TSC Modifications Committee).
- Identifying known issues to focus on to close and the process for this going forward.

Scope

SEMO exists as a contractual joint venture between EirGrid plc in Ireland and SONI Ltd in Northern Ireland with Market Operator licences held in both jurisdictions. As part of the revised SEM arrangements (I-SEM project), the SEM Committee published a decision in 2015 ([SEM-15-077](#)) which outlined the key roles and responsibilities of SEMO including:

- Balancing Market settlement
- Capacity Market settlement
- Administration and maintenance of the Trading and Settlement Code
- Agent of Last Resort function
- Fuel Mix Disclosure

In addition to compliance with the respective Market Operator licenses, SEMO's role in the market is explicitly defined in the SEM Trading and Settlement Code (TSC), which sets out the rules, procedures and terms and conditions which all parties must adhere to. SEMO is responsible for entering into, and at all times, administering the SEM TSC.

An overview of the areas which SEMO is responsible for under the TSC are outlined in Table 1. The scope of Focus Group discussions will be limited to these areas and any prevailing SEMO Price Control Decision in place at the time of meetings taking place. If these responsibilities are updated in the TSC, these also are updated for the scope of the SEMO Focus Group.

Table 1: Outline of SEMO Trading and Settlement Code Responsibilities

| Outline of SEMO TSC Responsibilities | |
|--|--|
| Chapter B | Governance of the TSC Management of modifications to the TSC Management of disputes Queries Registration Deregistration Suspension & termination |
| Chapters C, D & Appendix G of TSC | Publication of data REMIT obligations |
| Chapter E | Calculation of Imbalance Prices |
| Chapter F | Balancing Market Settlement Capacity Market Settlement Imbalance Settlement |
| Chapter G | Credit & collateral calculation Administration of settlement Reallocation |

For the purposes of the Focus Group's discussion, it is important for members to distinguish the role of SEMO from the roles of the Transmission System Operators (TSOs) who carry out, inter alia, scheduling and dispatch and conduct the capacity market auctions.

Membership of the SEMO Focus Group

The RAs want to ensure that there is a wide and balanced representation of market participants within the SEMO Focus Group and encourage expressions of interest from across industry and technologies.

The Group will normally be made up of representatives from the following:

- RAs (UR and CRU)
- SEMO
- TSOs
- Up to 10 industry representatives/market participants

The Group will be chaired by an industry representative/market participant.

If an appointed member is unable to attend a particular meeting, they may request to the RAs an alternate to attend in their absence. In the event that an appointed member leaves their organisation, changes role or decides to rescind their membership for any other reason, they/their organisation may request RA approval for appointment of an appropriate alternative member from their organisation.

The RAs will keep the membership of the group under review and will periodically request new Expressions of Interest (at least in line with the commencement of a new SEMO Price Control period).

Meetings

SEMO Focus Groups will be held once or twice each year to allow for the best input into the capital programme, system releases and the Market Systems Development Plan (MSDP). It is expected that the first meeting of this renewed Focus Group will take place in November 2025.

In advance of each meeting the RAs will engage with SEMO regarding information required for the briefing pack which will be issued in advance of each meeting to aid informed discussions at each meeting. Agendas and briefing packs will be provided approximately 1 week in advance to assist in enabling an informed discussion and allow for greater potential for the meeting to be concluded with areas where there is agreement and a commitment made to take specific items forward. Areas where agreement has not been reached will remain open and can be discussed at subsequent meeting(s) while taking onboard any new information/developments that may have occurred in the interim.

The Group is expected to discuss and, if appropriate, make suggestions to improve the performance and development of the SEM.

Meeting Administration

All engagements will be via virtual fora (MS Teams).

Each meeting is expected to last approximately two-three hours and there may be additional invitations to attend shorter pre-meet sessions with the RAs in advance.

Confidential information may be shared through the SEMO Focus Group, and where this occurs, members agree to preserve the confidentiality of any information as required. Where confidential information is shared, it is the responsibility of the party introducing the material to ensure the extent to which any information is confidential is clearly highlighted and treated as such².

To promote an open and constructive discussion, detailed minutes will not be prepared. A meeting note will be circulated by the RAs to cover the key areas of discussion, agreements, conclusions and actions.

² The type of information and level of detail may at times differ from that which the RAs are privy to due to some information being e.g. commercially sensitive.